

DEC and DOH Announce Preliminary Results of Research Into Perfluorinated Compounds In Fish In Hoosick Falls and Petersburg

DOH Issues Catch and Release Advisory for Thayers Pond to Ensure Recreational Anglers Do Not Consume PFC-Contaminated Fish

State to Bolster Capacity to Analyze Fish and Expand Research to Other Waterbodies

Hoosick Falls, N.Y. (JULY 24, 2017) -- The New York State Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation today announced the preliminary results of an ongoing study to assess potential perfluorinated compound (PFCs) contamination in fish in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg area. The study found elevated levels of PFCs, mainly perfluorooctane sulfonate acid (PFOS), in certain fish species in one of four waterbodies tested. DOH has issued a "catch and release" advisory for Thayers Pond to ensure that residents do not consume PFC-contaminated fish. This advisory applies to recreational fishing only, as no commercial fishing is conducted in the pond, and is in addition to current advisories that are in place on other water bodies in the area. There were no elevated levels of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in any of the fish species tested.

As part of the state's ongoing investigation into the extent of PFC contamination in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg area, DEC and DOH sampled fish from four popular lakes, ponds and streams used for recreational fishing. Sampling at each site included one or more sportfish species, as well as a minnow species to evaluate impacts to the ecological food chain. Specifically, DEC analyzed edible portions of the fish for PFCs, including PFOA and PFOS.

General Statewide Advice

Currently, for New York State fresh waters without specific fish consumption advisories, DOH has general advice to eat no more than four meals per month of sportfish. This general advice currently applies to most waterbodies in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg areas, and other parts of the state, including the Newburgh area where DEC also conducted this fish survey. For more information about the DOH fish consumption advisories, visit www.health.ny.gov/fish

Existing Fish Consumption Advisories

In addition, specific fish consumption advice currently applies to the Hoosic River and the Little Hoosic River downstream of the bridge at Route 2. This advice has been in place for many years and is based on historic PCB contamination and it is not related to PFC concentrations in fish. DOH recommends that men over 15 and women over 50 eat no more than

one meal per month of brown trout greater than 14 inches, and eat no more than four meals per month of brown trout less than 14 inches and all other species. Because there is a specific advisory for these waters, women under 50 and children under 15 are advised to not eat any fish from the Hoosic River and the Little Hoosic River downstream of the bridge at Route 2.

As part of the PFC study, DEC collected fish from the Hoosic River, Little Hoosic River, Thayers Pond and a stream that drains from the Petersburg landfill in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg areas. PFOA levels observed in fish from these waters were very low, and the only elevated levels of PFOS were observed in Thayers Pond.

Catch and Release Advisory for Thayers Pond

In addition to these current advisories, and based on the current data generated from these ongoing surveys of fish, DOH recommends that anglers practice "catch and release" only from the following waters until further notice:

AREA	WATERBODY
Hoosick Falls	Thayers Pond

"Fishing is critical to the outdoor recreation economy in the state and our research is showing that PFOA is not impacting fish in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg areas," said DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos. "Even though the environmental impacts from PFOA do not seem to be impacting fish, DEC continues to hold those responsible for the contamination accountable for cleaning up their mess."

"Aggressively investigating the full extent of PFC contamination and its potential impact on public health continues to be our top priority," said DOH Commissioner Howard Zucker. "Whether it's the water we drink, or the fish that we catch, residents can be assured that the Department of Health is taking actions to protect New Yorkers."

In absence of federal guidelines regarding PFOS levels in fish, DOH compared the levels observed in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg to specific advisory levels set for Michigan and Minnesota, as well as other available sources of relevant health information that informed the decision to recommend catch and release in this pond. To inform anglers of the advisory, DOH is working collaboratively with local officials to post signage around Thayers Pond.

DEC is continuing to sample fish from waters in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg areas for PFCs, and the resulting new information will be considered along with the currently available information to determine whether future DOH recommendations will change.

Expanded Study of PFCs in Fish

The state's recent study demonstrates that PFOS bioaccumulates in fish species to a greater extent than PFOA. Based on ongoing data generated by the state's Water Quality Rapid Response Team and DEC's survey of likely users of PFCs, DEC and DOH are identifying additional priority sites to conduct fish sampling. This expanded study will be used to guide future fish consumption recommendations in other waterbodies, and to advance the state's understanding of how fish and other organisms are being exposed

to these chemicals. To bolster the state's capacity to conduct these analyses, DEC will Creek Analytical Laboratory
in Gloversville, NY to test for PFCs and more quickly process samples.

For more information about PFCs in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg:

- <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/108791.html>
- <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/108820.html>